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ABSTRACT

In early 1988, the U.S. Supreme Court, in "Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier," held that school administrators may exercise "editorial control over the style and content of student speech in school-sponsored expressive activities so long as their actions are reasonably related to legitimate pedagogical concerns." A positive outcome from this decision would be a renewed interest in the teachings of ethics in the high school journalism curriculum. Although there is a plethora of literature dealing with student-press law, little scholarly attention has been paid to the teaching of media ethics within the public academy. There is a growing feeling that teaching First Amendment rights is necessary, but teaching students to think analytically and to act with moral conviction is just as essential. Since many practicing journalists receive their first formal training on the high school newspaper, it is imperative that their education be well-grounded in the ethical standards of the profession. This pedagogical objective necessitates a "values oriented" rather than a "values free" approach to journalism education. The teaching of journalistic values, whereby students are the passive receptors of knowledge, is a necessary but insufficient condition for ethics training. Students need to be more actively involved in this values-oriented education, and the pedagogical tool through which this can be accomplished is the "case study simulation" method based upon sound principles of moral reasoning. (Seventy-two notes are included.) (Author/MS)

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Title: The Teaching of Ethics and Moral Reasoning In Scholastic Journalism: The Pedagogical Imperative

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Presentation: Secondary Education Division, AEJMC, St. Petersburg, FL, January 1989

75 Word Abstract

In light of the Supreme Court's recent Hazelwood decision limiting the rights of student reporters and editors, this paper advocates a renewed interest in the teaching of ethics and moral reasoning in scholastic journalism. The pedagogical approach should involve a fusion of the principles of journalism, philosophy and critical thinking. The authors recommend a three-step case study simulation as the most effective teaching device for implementing this approach to the teaching of moral reasoning.

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Abstract

In early 1988 the U.S. Supreme Court, in Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier, held that school administrators may exercise "editorial control over the style and content of student speech in school-sponsored expressive activities so long as their actions are reasonably related to legitimate pedagogical concerns." Although this decision was greeted with a predictable outpouring of protests from civil libertarians and student and professional journalists, the Hazelwood majority opinion has refocused attention on the precarious balance between freedom and responsibility in the public academy.

The Hazelwood decision will hopefully foster renewed interest in the teaching of ethics in the high school journalism curriculum. Although there is a plethora of literature dealing with student press law, little scholarly attention has been paid to the teaching of media ethics within the public academy. However, there is evidence of some consciousness-raising in this respect among teachers of high school journalism. There is a growing feeling that teaching First Amendment rights is necessary, but teaching students to think analytically and to act with moral conviction is just as essential.

Since many practicing journalists receive their first formal training on the high school newspaper, it is imperative that their education be well-grounded in the ethical standards of the profession. This pedagogical objective necessitates a "values oriented" rather than a "values free" approach to journalism education. The teaching of journalistic values, whereby students are the passive receptors of knowledge, is a necessary but insufficient condition for ethics training. Students need to be more actively involved in this values-oriented education, and the pedagogical tool through which this can be accomplished is the "case study simulation" method based upon sound principles of moral reasoning.

Thus, this paper does three things: It (1) rejects the "value free" and "value clarification" approaches to education and documents the need for a return to "value-oriented" instruction in the public school; (2) advocates the incorporation of ethical instruction in the high school journalism curriculum; (3) recommends that this instruction be "value-oriented" rather than "value free;" (4) recommends that high school journalists be taught a system of moral reasoning predicated upon the fusion of certain fundamental principles of journalism, philosophy and critical thinking; and (5) suggests a mechanism (the "case study simulation") by which these objectives can be most effectively accomplished.

The Teaching of Ethics and Moral Reasoning In Scholastic Journalism: The Pedagogical Imperative

by

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I. Introduction

In 1969 the Supreme Court ruled that public school students do not "shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or expression at the schoolhouse gate."[1] The Court's unequivocal declaration in Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District was followed by a decade of litigation involving the scholastic press, in which student journalists demanded constitutional parity with their professional counterparts. These efforts met with some success within a sympathetic federal judiciary, striking a responsive chord at a time when the very foundations of the public academy were under seige from educational "reformers" who demanded a "values free" curriculum. High school journalism courses were revamped to include instruction on "press law" and the new-found freedoms of the student journalist.

But in early 1988 the Supreme Court retreated from its progressivist ideology reflected in Tinker. In Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier[2] the Court held that school administrators may exercise "editorial control over the style and content of student speech in school-sponsored expressive activities so long as their actions are reasonably related to legitimate pedagogical concerns."[3] Although this decision was greeted with a predictable outpouring of protests from civil libertarians and student and professional journalists, the Hazelwood majority opinion has refocused

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[1] Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District, 393 U.S. 503, 506 (1969).

[2] Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier, 14 Med.L.Rptr. 2081 (1988).

[3] Ibid., 2087.

attention on the precarious balance between freedom and responsibility in the public academy. And the Court suggested that the "teaching" of responsibility (i.e., ethical behavior) is a necessary concomitant of the exercise of freedom:

> A school must be able to set high standards for the student speech that is disseminated under its auspices. . . and may refuse to disseminate student speech that does not meet those standards. . . . Otherwise, the schools would be unduly constrained from fulfilling their role as "a principal instrument in awakening the child to cultural values, in preparing him for later profession training, and in helping him to adjust normally to his environment."[4]

The Hazelwood decision will hopefully foster renewed interest in the teaching of ethics in the high school journalism curriculum. Although there is a plethora of literature dealing with student press law, little scholarly attention has been paid to the teaching of media ethics within the public academy. However, there is evidence of some consciousness-raising in this respect. For example, journalism professor Ann Herlong, writing in a 1985 edition of Quill & Scroll, noted that helping journalism staffs balance "what they can do with what they ought to do is a vital step in advising publications and teaching high school journalism. Teaching First Amendment rights is necessary, but teaching students to think analytically and to act with moral conviction is essential."[5]

Since many practicing journalists receive their first formal training on the high school newspaper, it is imperative that their education be well-grounded in the ethical standards of the profession. This pedagogical objective necessitates a "values oriented" rather than a "values free" approach to journalism education. The teaching of journalistic values,

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[4] Ibid., 2086.

[5] Ann Herlong, "Journalism Ethics: making decisions the rational way," Quill & Scroll, April-May, 1985, p. 10.

whereby students are the passive receptors of knowledge, is a necessary but insufficient condition for ethics training. Students need to be more actively involved in this values-oriented education, and the pedagogical tool through which this can be accomplished is the "case study simulation" method based upon sound principles of moral reasoning. Thus, this paper does three things: (1) It documents the need for a return to "value-oriented" instruction in the public school; (2) it advocates the incorporation of ethical instruction in the high school journalism curriculum; (3) this paper recommends that this instruction be "value-oriented" rather than "value free;" (4) it recommends that high school journalists be taught a system of moral reasoning predicated upon the fusion of certain fundamental principles of journalism, philosophy and critical thinking; and (5) the authors suggest a mechanism (the "case study simulation") by which these objectives can be most effectively accomplished.

II. The Rationale For "Value-Oriented" Instruction

Since the introduction of the concept of mass public education in the Nineteenth Century, America's schools have been the primary institutional transmission belt for society's cultural and moral values. But the "nation is at risk . . . given the multitude of often conflicting demands we have placed on our Nation's schools and colleges."[6] We are routinely calling upon schools "to provide solution to personal, social, and political problems that the home and other institutions either will or cannot resolve."[7] It is often assumed that education for cognitive development unlike, for example, that

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[6] Beatrice Gross and Ronald, eds. The Great School Debate. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1985, p. 224.

[7] Ibid.

for character development or religious education, is value free.[5] This "value free" approach to teaching, which has characterized an influential philosophy of public education for much of this century, is predicated upon the "progressivist" ideas of John Dewey.[9] Dewey did not entirely reject a role for schools in ethical development but felt that moral education as a subject could not be directly taught. But a close examination of Dewey's philosophy reveals that he rejected the notion of absolute values -- and therefore the teaching of those values -- and believed instead that every moral situation is unique, i.e., "having its own unreplaceable good."[10] Thus, Dewey embraced what the contemporary philosophers refer to as "situational ethics."

But despite the progressivist notions of Dewey and his followers society has traditionally expected the schools to foster education that is essential to the well-being of the nation. Through the schools students learn about the "intellectual, moral, and spiritual strengths of our people which knit together the fabric of our society."[11] "The school's job is to help educate responsible citizens of a democracy, and these ...skills are crucial toward that end."[12] Howard Kirschenbaum has noted that the nation expects its citizens to possess "the values of justice, freedom, and equality (which) are explicit in the higher stages of moral reasoning; the same values are

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[5] John Raven, "Values, Diversity, and Cognitive Development," Teachers' College Record, Vol. 89, No. 1, 1987, p.21.

[9] E.g., see John Dewey, Democracy and Education -- An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education. New York: MacMillan Co., 1916, p. 198. John Dewey, Democracy and Education. New York: Macmillan Company, 1961, pp. 238ff; Larry C. Jensen and Richard S. Knight, Moral Education: Historical Perspectives. Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, Inc., pp. 87-94.

[10] Jensen, op. cit., p. 89.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Howard Kirschenbaum, Advanced Value Clarification. La Jolla, Calif.: University Associates, 1977, p. 52.

implicit in the valuing process and the value-clarification methodology."[13] Since the program introduced by Louis Raths, Merrill Harmin, and Sidney Simon in their influential 1966 book, Values and Teaching, value clarification has gained wide-spread popularity, yet "has generated its share of criticisms and misunderstandings. Among other things, value clarification has been called "hedonistic," "superficial," "relativistic," "value free," and "devoid of any cognet theoretical base."[14]

The "value clarification" movement is a response, in part, to Dewey's progressivism, but in our judgment it does not go far enough in instilling moral values in students. When one reads the history of the value-clarification methodology, evidence is present that conflict results for some students, if they are free to make decisions about their values. The "value clarification" approach might succeed in assisting students to "discover" their own values, but it does little to teach students to elevate their individual modes of conduct to those moral standards established by society. If society expects the student to live an exemplary life in a democratic society, the challenge for the school and the teacher is to provide training and education which permits success. One could also ask, "Should the schools help young people to internalize values that will guide them to more constructive lives?[15] We believe the answer is "yes."

Other aspects of society have relinquished their influence on the student, such as religion and the home. Many parents do not want their children to ask questions, to make their own observations, to be curious, or

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[13] Ibid., p. 43.

[14] Kirschenbaum, op.cit., p.7.

[15] Harold Howe II, "Can Schools Teach Values?", Teachers' College Record, Vol. 89, 1987, p. 55.

to use books to find information they themselves wanted.[16] During earlier periods in American schools, the home provided knowledge about values to the student. This no longer as true today. Thus,"the school will become an important testing ground for family-developed values."[17] "Desires, and so values, change in response to new historical conditions, new religions, new findings in science, new developments in technology, advances in education, and so forth."[18] Adults have problems in assisting young people in dealing with "value-rich" areas of confusion and conflict as politics; religion; family; friends; work; leisure; love, sex; male/female habits; and so on.[19]

Schools are plagued somewhat by the variety of role models presented to students. There are multiple variations of how teachers live and teach. These variations occur with personality differences, religious backgrounds, educational expectations, methodology and course goals. Using teachers as models creates unique problems and messages for young people. "The problem with this approach is that there are too many models modeling too many different values--different goals, life styles, speech patterns, moral codes, orientations toward work and play, life and death."[20]

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[16]Details of the scheme of evaluating pre-school children is found in G. McCail, Mother Start: An Account of an Educational Home Visiting Scheme for Pre-School Children, Edinburgh: The Scottish Council for Research in Education, 1981; distributed in North America by the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Toronto. The evaluation is reported in J. Raven, Parents, Teachers and Children, Edinburgh: The Scottish Council for Research in Education, 1980; distributed in North America by the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Toronto. While the methodology adopted for the latter was primarily "illuminative," the book also contains extensive survey data obtained from the parents of both experimental and control groups.

[17]Ibid.

[18]George F. Kneller, Foundation of Education. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1963, p. 220.

[19]Kirchenbaum, op.cit., p. 8.

[20]Ibid., p. 8.

Churches have also created poor role models for young people. Thus, students receive multiple messages from various groups. Within the democratic society teaching moral values is an expected goal since people outside the school disagree on all aspects of thought, purpose and goal. Schools as a result must assume a larger role in establishing concrete more values for the student to perceive and acquire. Also, one can argue that students spend more time at school than in the other environments. "As the major goal of schooling is developing the intellect, the very exercise of explaining ends and means and gaining agreement is itself educational."[21]

"One perceives that the main values received from schools are of two kinds: those that constitute the central core of our democratic heritage and those that make up the commonly shared ethical values of all people..."[22] Because schools cannot avoid "teaching values, they need to think of what values they desire to nurture and in what ways their school rules and customs bolster or erode the values and conduct they seek."[23] For reasons such as those mentioned, students should not be given free rein to determine their own values because they lack either the background or insight to establish the values important to journalism education, for example. Students are not "basically competent people whose talents are to exercised and developed."[24]

Edward A. Wynne, professor of education at the University of Illinois at Chicago, argues "...on the whole, school is and should and must be inherently

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[21] Theodore R. Sizer, Horace's Compromise: The Dilemma of the American High School. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1984, p. 160.

[22] Howe II, op.cit., p. 57.

[23] Ron Brandt, "Character and Critical Thinking," Educational Leadership, Vol. 43, No. 4, December 1985/January 1986, p. 3.

[24] Raven, op.cit., p. 23.

indoctrinative."[25] Opponents of the Hazelwood decision now write that ethical values must balance the freedom to write and publish without restrictions. If there is a weakness in education, it stems from educators who "lack most of the abilities identified as crucial to effective management and personnel development in the workplace."[26] "There is a role for behavior shaping in a defensible moral education, especially...It is a philosophical saw that one enters the palace of reasoning through the courtyard of habit."[27] Robert Coles writes: "The ability to form an attachment to ideals of a larger community or organization than oneself, and to exert one's influence for the good of the greater body,"[28] helps create character. He found that students can list the traits of individuals with character: a person who sticks to a set of principles; a person who can risk unpopularity...a person who has the courage to be himself, herself; a person, who, is open-minded, who plays fair...who doesn't deceive himself, herself."[29]

If students can establish criteria for evaluation of their peers, then teachers must find ways to assist students in achieving educational goals which translate into behavioral change. Students should enjoy the opportunity of learning values which society, the school and the teacher have established and clarified. Students do not possess the capabilities in the journalism

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[25]Edward A. Wynne, "The Great Tradition in Education: Transmitting Moral Values," Educational Leadership, Vol.43, No. 4, December 1985/January 1986, p. 9.

[26]Raven, op.cit., p.26.

[27]Alan J. Lockwood, "Keeping Them in the Courtyard: A Response to Wynne," Educational Leadership, Vol. 43, No. 4, December 1985/January 1986, p. 10.

[28]Robert Coles,"The Moral Life of Children,"Educational Leadership, Vol. 43, No. 4, December 1985/January 1986, p. 21.

[29]Ibid., p.20.

arena of using only their own experience in making moral decisions. Students reflect differences in background, insight, maturity and knowledge. Therefore, teachers "... must demand the best effort and performance from all students, whether they are gifted or less able, affluent, or disadvantaged, whether destined for college, the farm, or industry."[30] In order for students to learn well, they must "master specific tasks or set of tasks,concept or set of concepts, which can be measured by the 'right' way of doing (a task) or the 'correct' understanding of some thing (a concept)."[31]

Educators today, and journalism educators particularly, "find themselves under increased pressure to demonstrate the value and framework of their efforts and the student growth and change that resulted from educational experience."[32] To teach only the journalism skills necessary to produce a publication without specific principles, dwarfs the challenge of scholastic journalism. Article after article relating to the role and function of scholastic journalism in recent months has dealt with the importance and value of journalism education in the high schools, particularly those published since Hazelwood. But what is noticeably missing from the writings are the principles upon which moral and ethical decisions are made. The importance "of methodology, all games and simulation...are characterized by rules, roles, interactions, goals, and outcome criteria."[33] Unless such

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[30]Susan B. Glaser, "Interpersonal Communication Instruction: A Behavoral Competency Approach," Communication Education, Vol. 32, 1983, p. 30.

[31]Linda C. Lederman and Brent D. Rubin,"Systematic Assessment of Communication Games and Simulations: An Applied Framework," Communication Education, Vol. 33, April 1984, p. 154.

[32]Mary Pinola and Nancy Briggs,"Continuing the Quest for an Educational Philosophy for Speech Communication," The Florida Speech Communication Journal, Vol. 13, January 1985, p. 22.

[33]Lederman, op. cit., p.52.

activities "force players to come to terms with their actual behaviors, skills, and competencies,"[34] the exercises are limited.

"Moral, ethical or socially responsible behavior, or a lack thereof, ... undoubtedly reflects one's personal value system."[35] According to Rokeach, a value system is defined as an "enduring organization of beliefs concerning preferable modes of conduct or end-states of existence along a continuum of relative importance."[36] "For the idealist, values and ethics are absolute. The good, the true, and the beautiful do not change fundamentally from generation to generation or from society to society. In their essence they remain constant."[37]

William Damon, professor of psychology and chairman of education at Clark University, has been studying the effect of combining the traditional approach of teaching values and the theories of cognitive development: Adults communicate and enforce norms and values, while students learn cooperation and sharing, for example, through their activities and interactions with others.

In his book, The Moral Child: Nurturing Children's Natural Moral Growth, Damon[38] suggests these strategies:

* Directly engage students in activities that reflect the kind of values we wish to foster.

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[34] Ibid., p. 154.

[35] Stuart H. Surlin, "Value System Changes by Students as a Result of Media Ethics Course," Journalism Quarterly, Vol. 64, 1987, p. 564.

[36] Milton Rokeach, The Nature of Human Values. New York: Free Press, 1973.

[37] Surlin, op. cit., p.225.

[38] Cited in Karen J. Winkler, "Experts on Moral Development Find Common Ground Under Fire From Critics of America's Schools," Chronicle of Higher Education, October 26, 1988, p.4,8.

* Discuss moral dilemmas with students, to promote their ability to think about moral issues and express emotional responses to them.
* Be honest about our own reactions to moral dilemmas.
* Let students experience the consequences of their actions.

We believe the journalism teacher has the responsibility to establish the ethical values upon which student journalists will develop their knowledge, decisions, ideals, habits, and intellectual powers necessary for success as productive scholastic journalists. As Ralph Mosher, professor of education at Boston College, observes: ". . . we have to teach values in a way so as not to shut off the capacity for growth, not to prevent young people from later forming an autonomous view."[39] And Herbert J. Muller notes:

> We may ...welcome the conclusion that we cannot foretell the future, even apart from the possibility that it may not bear knowing. Uncertainty is not only the possibility that it many not bear knowing. Uncertainty is not only the plainest condition of human life but the necessary condition of freedom, of aspiration, of conscience--of all human idealism."[40]

From the foregoing discussion it is clear that we reject both the "value free" and the "value clarification" approach to education. Because of what we believe is an obvious decline in ethical conduct among our youth and society at large, the time has come to assume a more aggressive posture towards formal instruction in moral education within the public academy. The "back to basics" movement should include more than just a rededication to the teaching of cognitive skills; it should embrace the notion of ethics training as well. And scholastic journalism, devoted to reporting the dynamics of human existence and interaction within the high school environment, provides an

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[39] Ibid.

[40] Herbert J. Muller, "The open society," Readings in Professional Education, Aubrey Haan and Norma Haan, eds., New York: Allyn & Bacon, 1963, p. 133

excellent pedagogical opportunity for the teaching of ethics and moral reasoning.

III. Moral Reasoning: The Pedagogical Imperative

A. The Nexus of Journalism, Philosophy and Critical Thinking.

Formal instruction in "media" ethics, both at the college and the secondary school levels, has traditionally been characterized by the theoretical and the abstract. Students are often the passive receptors of knowledge about generalized axioms of journalism related to such things "objectivity," "accuracy," "truth," "fair play," and "conflicts of interests." For example, a leading text in scholastic journalism devotes only six pages specifically to a discussion of ethics, and most of this chapter consists of quoting "canons of journalism."[41] Although the application of these rather abstract principles to specific issues sometimes generates class discussion, students are left without a systematic approach to defend their decisions on moral grounds. In essence, the judgments students make about a particular ethical dilemma may not be "well-reasoned" conclusions and are thus not necessarily predicated upon rational constructs.

There is, therefore, a need for instruction in moral reasoning in scholastic journalism. The process of moral reasoning should include an examination of (1) the consequences of one's acts for others, (2) instances in which different students have the same information at their disposal and yet reach different conclusions when reasoning about the same moral question and (3) instances in which moral and nonmoral norms are confused with one

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[41]Earl English and Clarence Hack, Scholastic Journalism. 7th Ed. Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Press, 1984, pp. 270-75.

another.[42] These objectives are designed to develop a sense moral awareness and social responsibility.

Instruction in moral reasoning should recognize the common bond between the disciplines of journalism and philosophy. The scholarly underpinnings of such an interdisciplinary fusion are contained in such seminal works as Four Theories of the Press,[43] which explores the philosophical foundations of press responsibility, and the more contemporary literary efforts of John Merrill[44] and Clifford Christians, et. al. in Media Ethics.[45]

We believe, however, that this nexus between journalism and philosophy is necessary, but insufficient, to the teaching of moral reasoning within scholastic journalism. A third ingredient -- critical thinking -- must be added to the mix. Critical thinking has a long and honorable tradition in Western history, tracing its origins to the writings of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Like his teacher Plato, Aristotle believed that moral principles separating right from wrong could be derived through the power of reason.[46]

Critical thinking is defined as "the cognitive activity associated with the evaluation of products of thought."[47] This cognitive activity is, as

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[42]Joan E. Sieber, "A Social Learning Theory Approach To Morality," in Myra Windmiller, Nadine Lambert and Elliot Turiel, Moral Development and Socialization. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1980, p. 153.

[43]Fred S. Siebert, Theodore Peterson and Wilbur Schramm, Four Theories of the Press. Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1956.

[44]John C. Merrill, The Imperative of Freedom. New York: Hastings House, Publishers, 1974.

[45]Clifford G. Christians, Kim B. Rotzoll and Mark Fackler, Media Ethics: Cases and Moral Reasoning. 2nd Ed. New York: Longman, 1987.

[46]See S.E. Frost, Jr., Basic Teachings of the Great Philosophers. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1962, pp. 83-86.

[47]Robert J. Yinger, "Can We Really Teach Them to Think?", in Robert E. Young, New Directions For Teaching and Learning. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc., Publishers, 1980, p. 14.

suggested by the ancient Greeks, an essential component of the reasoning process, and is, therefore, just as important to moral reasoning as to other forms of intellectual activity. "Learning to think critically is in large measure learning to know when to question something, and what sorts of questions to ask, not just any question will do."[48]

The early research in critical thinking was "logic-oriented" and was concerned primarily with the "acceptability" of statements and judgments concerning such things as principles, hypotheses, arguments, terms and problems.[49] In fact, one scholar specifically distinguished the kinds of judgments made in moral philosophy from those of critical thinking.[50] But moral reasoning involves the examination of ethical principles, arguments and problems and, at least in the long-term, the consistency of moral decision-making. Thus, there is reason to believe that critical thinking theory and the "judgment-making" aspects of critical thinking should also be applied to the process of moral reasoning.

Although the concern for critical thinking abilities, as stated previously, has its genesis in ancient Greece, the commitment to the teaching of critical thinking has been virtually abandoned by the American school system. But critical thinking is essential to any systematic approach to moral reasoning. And since critical thinking is a skill, it is teachable.[51]

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[48] John E. McPeck, Critical Thinking and Education. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981, p. 7. The term "critical thinking" appears to have been introduced into the literature by B. Othanel Smith in "The Improvement of Critical Thinking," Progressive Education, Vol. XXX, March 1953, pp. 129-134.

[49] E.g., see Robert H. Ennis, "A Concept of Critical Thinking," Harvard Educational Review, Vol. XXXII, 1962, pp. 81-111; James A. Drake, Teaching Critical Thinking. Danville, Ill.: The Interstate Printers and Publishers, Inc., pp. 30-48.

[50] Drake, op. cit.,p. 31.

[51] McPeck, op. cit., p. 18.

Critical thinking has traditionally been associated with courses in logic and problem solving.[52] But logic and problem solving skills have serious limitations in the teaching of critical thinking. These abstract principles are not necessarily applicable to specific academic disciplines.[53] In other words, students' exposure to the principles of logic and problem solving will not necessarily insure that they will be able to apply these skills in other courses.[54] As Chet Meyers has noted in Teaching Students to Think Critically:

> . . . teachers in all disciplines play a crucial role in the development of students' critical thinking abilities. Just as students will not become proficient writers merely by taking a year of composition but must be required to practice good writing in all their classes, so students will develop good critical thinking skills only by being challenged to practice critical and analytical thinking in the context of all the different subjects they study.[55]

Thus, the transfer of skills in logic and problem solving from one discipline to another cannot be assumed in critical thinking. The criteria for the application of the critical thinking process are supplied by the norms and standards of the field under consideration.[56] For example, critical thinking and its application to moral reasoning in media ethics require some epistemological knowledge of journalism and philosophy. "An appropriate repertoire of knowledge and experience is a necessary condition for critical

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[52]Chet Meyers, Teaching Students To Think Critically. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1986, p. 3.

[53]Ibid., 4.

[54]E.g., see B. Hudgins, Learning and Thinking. Itasca, Ill.: Peacock, 1978; John E. McPeck, Critical Thinking and Education. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981.

[55]Meyers, op. cit., p. 5.

[56]McPeck, op. cit., pp. 7-8.

thinking."[57] A conceptual framework is needed for asking questions and forming moral judgments. One must conclude, therefore, that the teaching of ethics and moral reasoning in scholastic journalism should come in the advanced stages of the curriculum. Beginning students simply do not possess the knowledge or conceptual framework upon which to base well-reasoned judgments. In addition, armed with the theory and knowledge provided at the outset of the journalism curriculum, advanced students are better able to operationalize these concepts through application to real-life cases. The naturalistic theories of both Aristotle and John Dewey support the notion that moral learning and development comes through "doing" and habitual exercise.[58] In other words, moral reasoning judgments are necessary for moral action but are not sufficient for moral action.[59] Moral judgments must be put into action for them to become a part of the student's value system. Thus, the teaching of moral philosophy (ethics) in scholastic journalism should not be viewed as one distinct unit of instruction but should permeate the entire curriculum and should proceed in a systematic fashion from the teaching of basic journalism knowledge at the outset to "practical training" (i.e., experience) in moral reasoning in the more advanced stages.

Therefore, we believe the "fusion" of the principles of journalism, philosophy and critical thinking in the teaching of moral reasoning in the high school journalism curriculum should occur in three phases. Phase one should include the teaching of basic skills and the principles of good reporting. The teaching of these "reporting principles" should incorporate an

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[57]Yinger, op. cit., p. 14.

[58]See Lawrence Kohlberg, The Psychology of Moral Development. San Francisco: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1984, p. 514.

[59]Aristotle, Ethics, Book VI, Chapter 13.

examination of the "values" of journalism, e.g. accuracy, objectivity, fairness and balance. These values are important to an understanding of media ethical constructs, but standing alone are insufficient for an understanding of how they should be applied in a specific moral reasoning situation. Phase two should examine the ethical norms generally recognized in the Western tradition and their application to the field of journalism. In this section the teacher might rely upon the five time-tested alternatives suggested by Christians, Rotzoll and Fackler in their incisive case book, Media Ethics,[60] or other generally accepted theories of ethical conduct. The objective here is to provide student journalists with a philosophical foundation with which to defend their ethical judgments.

The third phase, then, should consist of the application of critical thinking theory to specific media ethics problems, based upon the knowledge acquired in phases one and two. This phase is the most difficult and challenging for the journalism educator and perhaps the most "painful" for the students. From early childhood an individual's interaction with his or her environment produces mental blueprints or "structures for thought.[61] A child's moral values and ethical behaviors are acquired through social learning.[62] To the extent that problem solving through critical thinking involves a values-oriented approach which may be in conflict with a student's existing blueprint, the student's present mental structures are found

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[60]Christians, op. cit., pp. 9-17.

[61]Jean Piaget, Psychology of Intelligence. Totowa, N.J.: Littlefield Adams, 1976, p. 119.

[62]Joan E. Sieber, "A Social Learning Theory Approach To Morality," in Myra Windmiller, Nadine Lambert and Elliot Turiel, Moral Development and Socialization. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1980, p. 132.

inadequate and must be altered or replaced.[63] The critical thinking component of the moral reasoning process requires that teachers simultaneously challenge students' established mental structures (and hence, in some cases, their value systems) and provide structure and support for the development of new ones.[64] In other words, if teachers of journalism ethics "do not offer a framework for making sense of the content of their courses, students will provide their own. And the framework that students provide for themselves may not help them develop the analytical skills that their teachers want them to learn."[65]

B. The Values Oriented Approach To Teaching Ethics.

The statement above that journalism teachers should challenge students' value systems suggests an active role for educators in instilling values. Therefore, we reject the arguments that the diversity of student populations attending many public schools precludes the possibility or wisdom of exposing students to a common set of ethical norms. Our position is that there are certain "fundamental" values (e.g., truthtelling, justice, prohibitions against stealing, etc.) to which society subscribes, and the fact that some individuals or groups choose, on occasion, to violate these ethical standards does not undermine their validity. In addition, we reject the "values clarification" approach to ethical training, since such an approach (whereby students are allowed to "discover" their own values) is contrary to the establishment of societal moral standards and militates against the teaching of ethical norms.

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[63]Meyers, op. cit., p. 13, citing A. Lawson and J. Renner, "Piagetian Theory and Biology Teaching," The American Biology Teacher, 1975, p. 337.

[64]Meyers, op. cit., p. 15.

[65]Ibid., 16.

If there are, as we suggest, common societal values, which values should be taught in a high school journalism curriculum? We recommend that ethics instruction in scholastic journalism be directed towards four "moral orientations." Within each of these "orientations" the instructor can then discuss specific ethical norms and values (e.g., the commitment to truth, respect for the privacy of others, objectivity, fairness, etc.) These primary categories are based upon Lawrence Kohlberg's philosophical discussions in The Psychology of Moral Development.[66]

First of all, values-related instruction in scholastic journalism should be directed at the normative order, i.e. orientation to prescribed rules and roles of the social or moral order. The focus of decision-making centers on the element of "rules."[67] Within the public academy the emphasis should be both on formal school rules and policies which impact on the publication of the school's newspaper and the more informal societal expectations of the role and responsibilities of the journalist. These should be explained thoroughly to students with the notion of balancing the student journalist's natural desire for freedom with a sense of social responsibility. It is imperative that high school journalism students appreciate the concept of ethical "limits" and the parameters within which they will have to operate once they enter the "real world." Even professional journalists must often temper their desire for autonomy with the limitations established by company policy or rules established by the publisher or executive staff. If the students at Hazelwood East High School had understood this concept, they might have had greater empathy for the principal under the circumstances.

Secondly, instruction in moral reasoning should be directed at what

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[66]Kohlberg, op. cit., p. 183.

[67]Ibid.

Kohlberg refers to as "utility consequences," i.e. orientation to the good or bad welfare consequences of behavior for others and oneself.[68] In other words, every ethical (or unethical) action has a reaction, and students should understand that they are accountable for the results of their decisions. Even if good motives (e.g., reporting the truth) result in anticipated bad consequences (e.g., causing harm to someone), students must still be prepared to defend their decision to place principle over consequence based upon the precepts of sound moral reasoning.

The third category of moral orientation is "justice" or "fairness."[69] Students must be taught the relationships between such concepts as liberty, equality and reciprocity. The newspaper, even the student newspaper, is a powerful voice. The subjects of news stories, like journalists, are autonomous individuals also and should be dealt with in terms of what they deserve rather than merely in terms of what the reporter feels will pique the interest or curiosity of the readers. Of course, this implies a sense of balance and proportion, and it was the absence of these (among other things) that led the principal at Hazelwood East High School to censor the student newspaper.

Finally, Kohlberg suggests that the student should be oriented to the "ideal-self," i.e. someone with conscience and virtue.[70] Students should have the opportunity to read about and to evaluate sound ethical decisions made by media practitioners who are widely respected in their fields. In other words, they need positive role models to emulate. Such readings should be assigned prior to enmeshing the students in the "case study simulations" described

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[68] Ibid.

[69] Ibid.

[70] Ibid.

below. As the student journalists begin to make sound moral judgments and to balance the notions of freedom and responsibility, they will develop greater sensitivity to others, a sense of accomplishment and higher self esteem. They will certainly become more ethically aware, and this should carry over into other aspects of their lives.

C. The "Case Study Simulation" Approach To Teaching Moral Reasoning.

There are several avenues available to journalism instructors who wish to employ the journalism-philosophy-critical thinking triad in the teaching of moral reasoning. But we recommend the "case study simulation" method of instruction. The case study simulation approach is a variation on the case study method generally associated with schools of business and requires that students "role-play" the key actors in a hypothetical (or actual) ethical dilemma. It has its roots in the Socratic method of teaching, whereby the students are presented with a problem and the students and instructor work through the problem with a series of questions and answers. The case study simulation has an advantage over conventional pedagogical approaches in that it (1) generates class discussion and poses questions for class exploration, (2) encourages students to reason and thus develops their critical faculties, (3) provides an opportunity for effective role-playing, in order that students might "empathize" with the other characters in the simulation and thus rid themselves of prejudice they often bring to classroom discussions, (4) improves students' social skills through classroom argumentation and debate, and (5) provides an effective means of implementing Kohlberg's four moral orientations outlined in the section above.

In addition, to the extent that the classroom can simulate "real world" conditions -- and the limitations are many -- the case study simulation approach accomplishes its educational objectives efficiently. It is a

"student-active" rather than a "student-passive" motivational teaching device. Meyers has noted the importance of student participation in critical thinking exercises:

> Teaching a framework for analysis will be in vain unless students have the motivation to engage in critical thinking. To develop this motivation, students must actively struggle with real problems and issues -- and see their instructors doing the same. If the instructor approaches critical thinking only in terms of some cut-and-dried objective methodology or merely rehearses students in the rediscovery of what is already known, students will acquire little motivation for critical analysis. Attitudinal aspects of critical thinking are better practiced than preached.[71]

To maximize its effectiveness, the case study simulation should consist of three steps: (1) a written case presentation; (2) an in-class role-playing simulation of the cases; and (3) a critique by the instructor and class members not directly involved in the simulation. In preparing for the in-class simulation the instructor should assign a written version of the case to be submitted by each student on the day of presentation. The students should write the case report from the standpoint of a media practitioner. But prior to the due date roles can be assigned to selected members of the class to be acted out in class. The role assigned to a particular individual does not have to conform to his or her own "view" of the case solution, since one of the objectives of this exercise is to enhance understanding of the others' points of view. A detailed critique at the end of the period is essential to insure that students derive maximum benefit from the case.

The written portion of the case study simulation should include a three-part examination. The first part we refer to as the Situation Definition. The student must identify the issue and the relevant facts which will impact upon the ethical alternatives to be considered before a decision is made. The Situation Definition consists of four steps: (1) A clear statement of the

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[71] Ibid., 8-9.

facts of the case; (2) identification of the internal and external factors (e.g., school policy, possible harm to third parties, impact outside the school, possibility of confrontation with school authorities) which should be taken into account in reaching the decision in the case; (3) identification of the values and principles implicated in the facts of this case (e.g., commitment to truth, right to privacy, the "right to know," the use of morally offensive content, etc.); and (4) an identification of the various individuals and groups likely to be affected by the ethical decision: the subject(s) of the story, the school administration, advertisers, the student readers and possibly individuals outside the school proper, e.g. the parents implicated in the divorce story in the Hazelwood decision.

The second part is the analysis section. This is the real "heart" of the decision-making process. In this part the student uses all of the information and data available to examine the situation and to evaluate the ethical alternatives. The analysis actually consists of two steps. First of all, the student should "balance" all of the elements identified in the "situation definition" above. This step includes a discussion of the importance, relative weights and potential impact of these elements as they might relate to the ultimate ethical judgment in the case at hand. Secondly, the student should select the "ethical guidelines" which might be applied to the resolution of this problem. Each guideline should be evaluated in terms of whether the decision in question can be justified from an ethical standpoint. Once again, the instructor might wish to employ the ethical alternatives recommended by Christians, Rotzoll and Fackler (e.g., Kant's Categorical Imperative, Aristotle's Golden Mean, Mills' utilitarianism, etc.), but a variation on these guidelines is provided by John Merrill in The Imperative

of Freedom.[72] Regardless of the guidelines employed, the instructor should explain them thoroughly to the class before they begin their case preparations.

The third part is the Decision. In this section the student makes a judgment and defends this decision, based upon the analysis above. The student should also indicate which ethical guideline is being employed in the defense of this decision.

The "role-playing" aspect of this exercise should be carried out on the day when students submit their case studies. However, it is important that the teacher save time at the end of the period for a critique. The class members not involved in the role-playing situation should first have an opportunity to provide their own reactions and analysis. The instructor should then summarize the points made during the simulation and the pros and cons of the possible solutions.

V. Summary

At the outset of this paper we established the need to teach positive moral values within the public academy. Since the school is the most influential institutional force in the life of the child, it has a "responsibility" to inculcate the child with at least a "sense" of morality and what constitutes acceptable ethical behavior. In our judgment the "values avoidance" and "values clarification" approaches are an abdication of this responsibility.

The high school journalism curriculum is an ideal focal point for the teaching of ethics in the public academy. The activities of scholastic journalism, i.e. the gathering, editing and publishing of information about

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[72]Merrill, op. cit., pp. 163-182.

other students, impacts directly on the lives of those students in a more personal and potentially more devastating way than perhaps any other school activity. Since ethics has to do with our "moral relationships" with others, the journalism curriculum is an ideal laboratory for the teaching of social responsibility. Thus, we feel that the teaching of ethics and moral reasoning is a pedagogical imperative for the high school journalism adviser.

Although there has been a renewed interest in the teaching of ethics within scholastic journalism programs, true learning can only materialize if the students are active participants in the decision-making process. This implies something more than class discussions of real-life ethical dilemmas. Students must be taught the "process" of moral reasoning and then afforded the opportunity to grapple with ethical problems within a simulated realistic environment. As outlined in this paper, this is an evolutionary process that should combine the fields of journalism, philosophy and critical thinking. The "values oriented" component of the instruction in moral reasoning should be predicated upon four principles or "moral orientations": (1) the limitations imposed by both formal and informal normative rules behavior; (2) awareness of the good and bad consequences of one's actions; (3) a sense of justice and fairness; and (4) the development of individual conscience, thereby raising the self esteem and ethical awareness of the student journalist.

The pedagogical tool which best simulates the moral reasoning process is the case study simulation. Despite some limitations, it is probably the most effective device in exposing students to the realities of ethical decision-making. It is "student active" rather than "student passive" and provides an opportunity for critical thinking about ethical judgments. The case study simulation cannot insure that students will act responsibly once they leave

the public academy and become practicing journalists, but it can provide an opportunity for students to make ethical decisions before they are actually placed into morally compromising positions under time pressure deadlines in the "real world."

The need for a renewed commitment to standards of ethical conduct within society is so self-evident that it doesn't really need any defense. This ethical "retooling" should be done at all levels of society, but scholastic journalism programs are in a unique position to effectuate a program of ethical reasoning targeted to our impressionable youth who are, in many cases, searching for moral direction.